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EARLY STATE RECORDS PROJECT

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STATE LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

AND

CATALOGUE

OF THE

WEST VIRGINIA STATE LIBRARY

FOR THE

YEARS 1877 AND 1878.

WHEELING:
W J JOHNSTON, PUBLIC PRINTER.
1878.

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA,

STATE LIBRARIAN'S OFFICE,
WHEELING, November 1st, 1878.

To His Excellency, HENRY M. MATHEWS,
Governor:

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following Report and Catalogue, as State Librarian, with a few suggestions.

I have the honor to be
Very respectfully,
Your Obedient Servant,
E. L. WOOD, *State Librarian.*

STATE LIBRARY.

The Library has never been so complete as now, since we have been a State. The appropriation of $1,200.00 made by the Legislature of 1877, did a great deal toward completing the missing back Reports. With the exception of Louisiana, Alabama, Florida and North Carolina the State Reports are complete.

Several years ago there was a system of exchanging Reports organized by the different States, and it is a great saving to all, and more especially to us, in this · our State publishes two volumes a year, and we donate two volumes to each State; the average cost of these books is $3.50 each, making our donations amount to $266.00 a year; now the small States publish two volumes, and the larger ones publish from four to six volumes a year. The most of the State Reports are higher priced than ours, (ours being sold at cost), so we are saved by this system of exchange about $450 00 a year.

But there are other important books that it is necessary for the Supreme Court to have. With the exception of a very few, the books in the Library are of a very old edition, and really unfit for the Court's use, there is no exchange for this class of books and we are compelled to purchase them. The Supreme and District Court Reports are also very deficient.

I hope it will be the pleasure of the Legislature to make an appropriation of at least $3,500.00 for the purchase of these books that are so badly needed. With this amount expended the State Library will be what it should—thorough as a law library.

There are about one hundred and twenty duplicate volumes in the Library that could be disposed of which are of no value to us. I have had calls for them, but not having authority to dispose of them they are still on hand.

The Catalogue appended is of law books exclusive, numbering four thousands four hundred and twenty. During the last year we have received from the different States about one hundred and twenty-five Reports. The Catalogue was very carefully prepared, giving the number of case, shelf and date of publication. I purpose in my next Report and Catalogue to make it complete. I could not do so this time, for the reason that we have not shelf room. A great many of the books (some of course of no value) are now on the floor, having no place to shelve them.

The appearance of the Library could be greatly improved upon, by placing upon the floor a carpet or matting, table, chairs, desk and a remodeling of the cases, making them lighter and not as high. It is impossible to keep it free from dust, but there certainly can be an improvement on the way it has been kept. A broom and dusting brush should be employed every morning.

The old style sliding doors to the cases could not be worked at all and had to be removed. They are now stowed away, and can be used in case they are remodeled. Something should be done in this matter, for in the present condition of the book cases, the sulphur from the city is fast destroying the books, which are of great value; in fact some of which could not be replaced, having gone out of print.

It is the opinion of the Judges that there should be three new full sets of Virginia Reports, in order to facilitate business.

These Reports are in greater demand than any other, and when the court meets for the purpose of writing opinions, they are kept back considerable on account of the books being in use by some one of them.

This will probably be the last large appropriation asked for the Library, as this amount will complete it up to date, and the only expense we will be to in the future will be new text books as they are published; as they are not published very rapidly, a small annual appropriation will be sufficient.

The appropriation of $200.00 for the contingent expenses of the Library for last year and this year has been exhausted on postage and express matter. Each voucher is on file in my office.

E. L. Wood.

State Librarian.